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CHICAGO (WBBM) - Congressman Mark Kirk says Olympic athletes from the United States and other countries could be at risk next year in Beijing, unless the Chinese government takes actions that it has been unwilling to take until now.

WBBM's Bob Roberts has the story.

Kirk (R-Ill.) outlined his concerns to reporters at O'Hare Airport after returning from a bipartisan trip to China.

Based on the group's discussions, Kirk said there appears to be disagreement within the Chinese government over Olympic security arrangements. He said the Chinese Foreign Ministry seems to understand but said Chinese police don't and believe they can handle security without help.

The North Shore congressman, who is also a Naval Reserve intelligence officer, said that could be a deadly mistake.

Kirk said he would like to send agents from the FBI, the U.S Secret Service and the Domestic Security Agency, according to a plan that has been in the hands of Chinese officials since April.

"We understand some of the threats, the threats to Americans, better than anyone else, and can help protect our Olympic venue," he said. "And this goes for other delegations. Colombian terrorists would like to hit their delegation. Hamas would like to hit the Israeli delegation. And so on."

There have been no attacks on athletes at the three post-9/11 Olympics, but Kirk said each

mapped out much more massive security plans, that allowed foreign security agents to take an active role.

He said he is especially concerned because of the influence Taliban-backed drug lords are beginning to exercise in some parts of China.